

(incoming) Vice President's Message For Your Information -- Susan Twombly



(photo: greg dubrow)

In this Issue:

(incoming) Vice-President's
Message (pg. 1)

The 2007 AERA Program
(pg. 1)

Graduate Student Message
(pg 4)

Editor's Note:
An spread-sheet with all
Division J sessions is available
along with the Pen on-line at
the [Division J website](#).



Editor: [Greg Dubrow](#),
[University of California](#),
[Berkeley](#)



At the end of the 2007 conference, I have the honor of succeeding Linda Hagedorn as Division-J Vice-President. Linda has done a marvelous job of leading the division as the larger association has gone through some major transitions, including a new executive director. Linda is leaving Division-J in great shape and I will work hard to build on her achievements. Professional associations depend on the good will and hard work of many volunteers, and Division-J is no different. The division has an excellent executive council, but the success of our major activity, the Annual Meeting, depends on participation of dozens more volunteers. For me, one of the most gratifying aspects of participating in AERA has been, and will continue to be meeting new people. I look forward to serving the division for the next three years and meeting many new friends—beginning in Chicago!

The AERA 2007 Program **Vicki J. Rosser** **University of Missouri-Columbia**

Chicago here we come! The 2007 Program for Division J promises to deliver quite a diverse and exciting selection of intellectually stimulating sessions to our members. The program committee has put together more than 22 symposia, 55 research paper sessions, 70 paper discussions/round tables, 32 posters, and eight invited vice presidential sessions. We are pleased to say that we accepted 54.60% of the submissions, and this is right on target compared to last year's acceptance rate of 54.58%.



2007 J Program Highlighted Sessions

The program planning committee was very mindful to support the theme of this year's annual meeting, The World of Educational Quality. The committee believes they have provided a nice range of national and

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

international perspectives that encompass the overall program theme. Here are a few highlighted sessions to get you ready for the annual meeting in Chicago.

How College Affects Students: A Retrospective and Future Considerations, Participants include Patrick Terenzini and Ernest Pascarella with Deborah Carter, John Smart, and Barbara Townsend as respondents and Lamont Flowers as session chair.

Partnerships With the Government of Mexico: Promoting Immigrants' Education Through Binational Initiatives. This session is co-sponsored with Division K and the session is organized by Javier Tapia and Angela Valenzuela. The presenter are Martha Montero-Sieburth, Luis Moll, and Christine Sleeter and the discussant is Lourdes Diaz Soto.

Numbers and Borders: The Perils of Institutional, State, and International Comparisons with Clifford Adelman as the presenter and Frankie Santos Laanan as session chair. Sensationalist journalism, reports from august bodies, and touchstone reference works of international organizations all rely on statistical descriptions of the educational fate of students. These representations assume that borders (institutional sector, state, national) are never violated, and that the contexts for student behavior are fixed and uniform. Adelman is going to explore three cases to demonstrate that it just ain't so, and to offer alternative ledgers for guiding policy deliberations.

The Future of Higher Education and Educational Opportunity. The Commission on the Future of Higher Education recently released their recommendations on how colleges and universities should respond in the future. But are these recommendations realistic? Will they work? And will institutions of higher education, states, and the federal government respond accordingly? Dr. Watson Scott Swail, president of the international think-tank, Educational Policy Institute, will take a close look at future trends and the real future of higher education and educational opportunity. This session is chaired by Laura Perna.

Testing Equity in Division J. This panel brings together researchers interested in discussing Division J's role in promoting relevant research on educational equity. Christine McPhail and James Earl Davis will facilitate this interactive conversation about the growing importance of equity within the context of higher education research. Although, equity may be often taken for granted in the daily conversation about higher education [in general], it is an issue that requires further discussion and examination in higher education research. This conversation will include a critical discussion of the role that equity-focused research has played in higher education. In addition, the participants will be asked to share their perceptions on the role of Division J in promoting an equity-focused research agenda.

Higher Education and the World: International Education and the Politics of Experience. Presenters are Benjamin Baez, Claudia Matus, and Susan Talburt. The symposium inquires into the higher educational "internationalization" as it relates to individuals' and groups' experiences. Specifically, the papers study discourses that frame faculty international experiences, the disjuncture between official discourses pertaining to "international students" in the US and their perceptions of their experiences, and the curriculum of a study abroad program.

Research Across the Color Line: Challenges and Opportunities. Presenters are Marybeth Gasman, Rachelle Winkle Wagner, MaryBeth Walpole, and Clifton Conrad with Deborah Carter as discussant. There persist considerable group membership boundaries, ethical issues, and questions of the possibility of conducting meaningful, ethical, and valid "outsider research." This symposium attempts to explore the challenges and opportunities surrounding research across the color line.

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

Strengthening Precollegiate Education in Community Colleges by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Presenters are Rose Asera, Andrea Conklin Bueschel, and Lloyd Bond. The project attempts to inform one of the most pressing and intractable problems in higher education today: effective ways to increase the success of pre-collegiate (also called “developmental” or “remedial”) students in the nation’s community colleges.

GSC Division J Fireside Chat: Crafting a Research Agenda That Is Relevant, Timely, and Personally Fulfilling. The presenters are Ernest Pascarella and Patrick Terenzini with graduate student co-chairs Christopher Shawn Coogan and Cassandra Lewis. These scholars will discuss how finding a dissertation research topic, much less crafting a quality research agenda, is one of the most daunting tasks for many graduate students. Some are unsure of the relevance of a potential topic, while others wonder about the prospects of finding personal satisfaction through research. They will also share how they have crafted personal and collaborative research agendas that are personally and professionally fulfilling.

Meet the Higher Education Journal Editors. Chaired by Jillian L. Kinzie and participants include John C. Smart (Research in Higher Education), Florence A. Hamrick (Journal of College Student Development), Leonard L. Baird (Journal of Higher Education), Amaury Nora (Review of Higher Education), James C. Palmer, and P. Barry Lumsden. These editors represent some of the most well-known scholarly outlets within the field of higher education.

Division J Dissertation of the Year is chaired by Lenoar Foster. This session will allow the winner, the first runner up, and the commendation award recipients to present their dissertation research.

Last but not least, please mark your calendars to include the J business meeting-reception, as well as Linda Serra Hagedorn’s vice presidential address dedicated to Berta Vigil Laden.

My very best to all of you—safe travels to Chicago.

Approaching the AERA Annual Meeting with Confidence

Cassandra C. Lewis

Division-J Graduate Student Co-Representative

Doctoral Candidate, University of Maryland College Park

I don’t know about you, but I really like pep talks. I like giving and receiving them. The kind of pep talk that I am referring to is—what a best friend might impart when one is anxious about an upcoming job interview; or the kind that a mother gives a kid in the third grade who has to make a front-of-the-room class presentation about Plymouth Rock, or the solar system. Phrases like “you are going to do a great job!” or “wow, you really know this stuff!”--tickle my ears, warm me up, and give me a huge double dose of confidence. Well, the reality is that parents and best friends can’t be carried around in our back pockets, to be pulled out in the event that we need a boost of confidence. But frankly, events like the AERA annual meeting are often times when such an option would be helpful. So, for those graduate students who are like me, consider this your very own personal pep talk, or at the very least, a reminder of why you should approach the AERA annual meeting with confidence.

As graduate students on our respective campuses, we are all well familiar with the so- called “lay of the land”; what professors have sterling reputations, but are personable and approachable; which of our peers are willing to listen to a fledgling idea, free of judgment and criticism. At the AERA annual meeting--where the very list of attendees, presenters, and speakers, reads like the Who’s Who of our field, it is easy and, I daresay entirely normal to feel overwhelmed, unsure of oneself, and at times, literally at a loss for words. If this is your first annual meeting, you may find yourself wondering: “it really OK to ask a question during

Continued on page 4

Q&A?” or “should you introduce yourself to a well-known scholar?” The answer to both questions is a resounding yes! Though the AERA annual meeting may seem large and formidable, you can and should approach it with confidence.

For this article, I reflected on what is it about a good pep talk that leaves one feeling validated and confident. The following three points represent my take on what such encouragement offers. Once we have determined this, I believe it can be related to our experience at the AERA annual meeting.

1. You belong. In my estimation, graduate students, like our favorite professors, or our most esteemed scholars and practitioners, all have the same right to be at the annual meeting. Even though our claims to and roles in the association may be different, we all serve a critical role in advancing AERA. Graduate students contribute fresh ideas and perspectives to AERA and our presence is essential for its growth and renewal. So, if you have a question during Q&A, feel free to ask it! You belong.
2. You are prepared. You have done diligent and carefully crafted work in your classes, independent readings, and/or collaborative projects. Your presentation is interesting, thoughtfully put together, and your conclusions are sound. If the aforementioned does not ring true, you still have time before the meeting to make it so! For additional guidance, check out the ‘Presentation Tips’ link found under the Meeting and Events sidebar on the AERA website. Tricia Gallant’s articles on Building your professional portfolio at AERA in the Fall 2005 and Winter/Spring 2006 issues of the PEN are also helpful.
3. You are not alone. Ask the most experienced presenter you know, and they will undoubtedly tell you that they still get nervous or unsure or at the very least, they will remember being in such a state when they first started out. While some level of insecurity is normal, the more affirmation one receives, the easier it will be to overcome those feelings and prevent them hindering us from making new connections or getting our questions answered.

With over 25,000 members, 12 divisions, 137 Special Interest Groups, and hundreds of sessions---you are bound to find someone who shares your research and professional interests. So, no matter how obscure your topic might seem or how isolated you feel on your home campus, at AERA, you will not be alone.

You can begin making those connections, at the annual meeting, by visiting the Graduate Student Resource Center and in particular, attending two Division-J graduate student events: Our fireside chat and graduate student social.

I’ll see you and your confidence in Chicago!



photos: greg dubrow

Announcement:

Darryl Holloman (Ph.D., Georgia State) has joined the U. of Arkansas-Little Rock Higher Education program to lead the MA program in College Student Affairs and the Ed.D. concentration in Student Affairs Administration. He can be reached at <dxholloman@ualr.edu>.

